

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-06

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R 032341Z FEB 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CVIS, MA

SUBJECT: VISA REFUSALS FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL

1. MALAGASY CHARGE HAS INFORMED DEPT THAT GDRM HAS
REFUSED VISAS FOR TWO GROUPS OF U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL
WHO WERE PLANNING TO STOP BRIEFLY IN MADAGASCAR.

2. COL. FRANK R. KOETHE, COMMANDING OFFICER AND
SGT. MAJOR WILLIAM E. LEMERISE WERE ISSUED VISAS FEBRUARY
2, AFTER PRESENTING LETTERS FROM NAVY DEPT EXPLAINING THAT
THEY WERE TRAVELING TO TANANARIVE TO INSPECT MARINE
DETACHMENT AT EMBASSY. LATER SAME DAY, UPON RECEIVING
WORD FROM GDRM THAT VISAS WERE NOT TO BE GRANTED, CHARGE
ADVISED THAT VISAS HAD BEEN CANCELLED. NO REASON WAS
GIVEN FOR CANCELLATION.

3. ON SAME DAY COL. L.G. STANG AND TWO OTHER CREW MEMBERS
WHO PLANNED TO DELIVER DATT AIRCRAFT TO EMBASSY PRETORIA
WERE ALSO REFUSED VISAS. DOD MESSENGER WAS INFORMED BY
MALAGASY EMBASSY THAT NOTE WOULD BE SENT TO DEPT EXPLAIN-
ING REFUSAL.

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4. ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY SHOULD CONTACT APPROPRIATE GDRM OFFICIALS TO SEEK CLARIFICATION OF GDRM POLICY TOWARDS GRANTING VISAS TO OFFICIAL USG TRAVELLERS AND ASK THAT GDRM RECONSIDER ITS DECISION RE ISSUANCE OF VISAS FOR MARINE CORPS INSPECTORS. WE SEE NO USEFUL PURPOSE IN RAISING QUESTION OF AIRCRAFT STOPOVERS SINCE MALAGASY HAVE PERSISTENTLY REJECTED ANY VISITS OF FOREIGN MILITARY CRAFT.

5. COMMENT: SINCE VISAS WERE GRANTED TO FOREIGN SERVICE INSPECTORS IT APPEARS THAT GDRM ACTION MAY BE AIMED ONLY AT MILITARY PERSONNEL. ALTHOUGH WE REALIZE THAT YOUR APPROACH MAY STIR UP QUESTION OF MARINE PRESENCE AT EMBASSY, WE BELIEVE IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE CLEAR PICTURE OF GDRM ATTITUDE AT THIS POINT. INGERSOLL

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